



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Gallatin National Forest

Hebgen Lake Ranger District
P.O. Box 520
West Yellowstone, MT 59758
Phone: 406-823-6961
Fax: 406-823-6990

File Code: 1950/5150

Date: December 20, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is the Lonesome Wood (LW) Vegetation Management Project Environmental Assessment (EA) for your review and comment. Color copies of the map are available upon request or on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin>, under 'Projects and Plans'.

The proposed project is designed to achieve the goals of increased firefighter and public safety, and reduced wildland fire risks to adjacent land and structures that have been identified as WUI. The Lonesome Wood Vegetation Management project has two primary focuses: reducing wildland fuels in the wildland urban interface (WUI), and providing adequate evacuation routes for forest users, homeowners, and business owners and their customers. The project area is located on National Forest System (NFS) lands on the west side of Hebgen Lake. The LW project area extends from Highway 20 on the south, and Hebgen Lake on the east and north.

The EA analyzes two action alternatives, in addition to the No Action Alternative. Alternative 2 (Proposed Action) includes approximately 1770 acres of mechanical thin, 850 acres of understory thin and 440 acres of prescribed burning. A total estimated 3,045 acres would be treated under alternative 2. Alternative 3 (Mitigated Alternative) includes approximately 1650 acres of commercial thin, 760 acres of understory thin, 320 acres of slashing and prescribed burning. A total estimated 2,750 acres would be treated in alternative 3. Approximately 3.9 miles of temporary road and 2.4 miles of reconstructed project roads would be needed to implement the project.

In accordance with 36 CFR 215.5 (2003) **comments must be postmarked or received within 30 days following the date of publication of this legal notice in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle.** In deference to the holidays, the official comment period will not start until after January 1, 2008. The comment period will end no sooner than January 28, 2008. Check the Bozeman Daily Chronicle or call the office for the "official" end of the comment period.

In order to retain your administrative appeal rights, you must provide timely, written, oral, or electronic comments. They must include: (1) name, address, telephone number, and organization represented, (if any); (2) title of the document on which the comment is being submitted; (3) specific facts and supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider; and (4) signature. For appeal eligibility, each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must either sign the comments or verify their identity upon request. Individual members of an organization must submit their own comments to meet the requirement for appeal eligibility. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection.



Comments on the EA should be sent to: Gallatin National Forest – Bozeman Ranger District, 3710 Fallon St, Ste. C, Bozeman, MT 59771, *Attn: Teri Seth – Re: Lonesome Wood EA* or hand-delivered to the Bozeman or Hebgen Lake Ranger Stations during normal business hours.

Written comments must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, e-mailed, or otherwise submitted by 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. Hand delivered comments must be time and date imprinted at the Gallatin National Forest, Bozeman or Hebgen Lake Ranger District Offices by the close of business on the last day of the comment period.

Oral comments must be provided at the Gallatin National Forest, Bozeman or Hebgen Lake Ranger Districts during normal business hours via telephone or in person, or if during non-business hours, must be at an official agency function (such as a public meeting), which is designed to elicit public comment. Comments must be received by the close of business on the last day of the comment period.

Comments may be submitted electronically to the following e-mail address: **comments-northern-gallatin@fs.fed.us** and must be in one of the following formats: MS Word, Word Perfect or RTF. The subject line must contain the name of the project for which you are submitting comments. For electronically mailed comments, the sender should receive an automated electronic acknowledgement from the agency as confirmation of receipt. If the sender does not receive an automated acknowledgement of the receipt of comments, it is the sender's responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.

Additional information is available from Teri Seth at the Bozeman Ranger Station (406)522-2520, or Anna Anderson at the Hebgen Lake Ranger Station (406)823-6961. If you would like to meet in person to discuss this project please call Teri or myself (406)823-6961.

We look forward to hearing from you. Best in the Holiday season!

Sincerely,

WILLIAM R. QUEEN
District Ranger

cc: Teri Seth, D6
Marna Daley, SO